Chapter 30: Australian War Memorials: A nation re-imagined

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Introduction

Since the end of the First World War in 1918, the war memorial has become a ubiquitous presence in both the Australian commemorative landscape and the national psyche. Serving initially as sites of personal and communal grief and a focus for those intent on nation building, they have proved to be remarkably durable symbols of national identity and communal memory. Yet as Young observed, memorials appear to remember everything but their own past.[1] This paradox has allowed succeeding generations to co-opt them into an evolving national narrative, one grounded in a celebration of the martial virtues of its citizens. *Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall* (2015)[2] and the *Australian Peacekeeping Memorial* (2017) are recent additions to the Australian commemorative landscape, ones that seek to respectively recognise the military service of Indigenous Australians and Peacekeepers. Both represent something of a challenge to the war memorial orthodoxy, the former in subject matter and the latter in style. Yet their capacity to communicate the story of two quite different groups of disenfranchised Australian servicemen and women is as yet untested. Given the pervasiveness of the Anzac mythology which has its origins in the nation's experience during the First World War, it is unlikely that either will contribute to a re-evaluation of Australian history. Both may well be subsumed into the broader military narrative that elevates the original Anzacs to the status of founding fathers.

Although there was a surprising degree of diversity in the design of war memorials in Australia in the years after 1918, the choice of symbolism nevertheless offered a grieving nation

the comfort of the familiar. There was no place for modernism in war memorial design, just as there was no place for it in Australian war literature or visual art. Edwardian classicism was familiar and seemingly better placed to convey the innate nobility of the Australian soldier.[3] On Gallipoli and in the Middle East, he had fought close to the cradles of these ancient civilisations. Now, in death, he would be commemorated by classical designs which brought with them a ready-made selection of symbolic motifs:

> Death was shown through urns and broken columns; mourning through wreaths; remembrance through eternal light and torches; sacrifice through crosses; victory through the laurel, triumphal arches and Winged Victories; mankind through globes; honour through columns; fortitude through lions; regeneration through water and obelisks; and national birth through rising suns.[4]

War memorials were not considered an appropriate place for artistic experiment or innovation. Instead they were an "opportunity to bring together all that seemed best and most noble in the artistic life of the civilization they had fought to preserve."[5] Indeed, before 1914 Australia was "in many respects a confident, socially progressive country, a social laboratory for the world, pioneering in labour and social policy and votes for women."[6] After 1918, it was, as Beaumont suggests, a "broken nation."[7] Memorial building sought to find meaning in this brokenness and in facilitating the process of mourning and bereavement, memorials became, at least in a personal sense, a matter of forgetting as much as remembering.[8]

The mythology that enshrouded this first great national experience of war, which itself became both a source of cohesion and division, was eagerly claimed by conservative politicians

as a national rallying point, one vehemently defended by organisations such as the Returned and Services League (RSL). In concert with men such as the official historian Charles Bean, these defenders of Anzac imposed an "artistic tyranny" that exerted a pervasive influence on the nation's cultural responses to the war.[9] This is particularly evident in artwork produced for the Official War Art Scheme, with the collection at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) derided by at least one critic as "mediocre."[10] This conservative control extended to the commemorative landscape, or at least it did until recently.

It was not just the artistic sensibilities of powerful individuals and groups which shaped memorial design. As Jay Winter observed, there was in evidence "the powerful, perhaps essential, tendency of ordinary people, of many faiths and of none, to face together the emptiness, the nothingness of loss in war."[11] The decision to not repatriate the bodies of the fallen and instead leave them in battlefield cemeteries on the other side of the world or consigned to the "terrible oblivion of the missing" exacerbated this sense of emptiness.[12] Memorials would therefore inevitably serve not just as sites of private and public commemoration, but also as 'empty tombs.' In a broader sense they became one of the means by which nations created what George Mosse saw as the nationalist myth of the war. In the Australian context, war cemeteries and war memorials were part of the creation of a "church for the nation."[13]

> During the 1920s and 1930s, a 'cult of the fallen' sat at the heart of Australia's national culture of commemoration of the First World War. War memorials faithfully honoured the 'glorious dead' and Anzac Day remembrance services paid tribute to the men who died overseas having 'given birth to the nation'. Such traditions emerged to assist bereaved families to grieve in the absence of a

body and to preserve memories of the 60,000 battlefield dead and their 'supreme sacrifice'.[14]

Yet as Martin Crotty and Craig Melrose have argued, Australian commemoration was never just about lamentation. There is ample justification for their claim that triumphalism was in fact "the dominant force in the interwar years, fuelled by pride in the achievements of Australian soldiers and thanksgiving for victory over a perceived Prussian-German military despotism."[15] Lamentation and triumphalism were not, however, contradictory impulses. They were easily and readily reconciled within a broader narrative of Australian heroism that permitted the nation to simultaneously mourn and celebrate. The choice between utilitarian memorials, such as halls, hospitals and schools, or stone monuments, however did reflect a preference for the sacred over the profane. Ken Inglis estimated in 1998 that 60 percent of First World memorials were monuments of one type or another, leaving the balance shared between halls (20 percent), hospitals or schools (one to two percent) and those that possess both functional and monumental characteristics (19 percent).[16] Recent construction in the last two decades spawned by the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World (1995) and the centenary of the First World War (2014 – 2018), would have only increased the percentage of monuments over utilitarian memorials as tastes shifted further toward the abstract.

The type of monuments favoured by communities across the nation in the years after 1918 ranged from arches, to columns, pillars, urns, crosses, obelisks, and statues, with some communities choosing clockless towers or cenotaphs modelled on the one designed for Whitehall by Sir Edwin Lutyens in 1920. The obelisk was the most popular monumental form followed by generic statues of soldiers. As Bruce Scates observed, the "haunting absence of a

body to mourn" ensured that a "host of civic monuments [would] inscribe the Australian landscape with a community's enduring sense of loss."[17] Where Australian commemoration differed from most other combatant nations was in the widespread practice of listing the names of men who served but had returned, as well as those who lost their lives. Sometimes they were listed separately, while others identified the dead by a cross, asterisk or sabre next to their name. In listing the 'fallen' the designers made the "absent present again."[18]

The Second World War again raised the issue of whether monuments or utilitarian memorials would dominate the landscape. It was a different world though than it had been in 1918. Ninety percent of respondents in a survey conducted in 1943 indicated a preference for utilitarian memorials. In another poll conducted in 1945, 58 percent opted for additions to the monuments already in existence. One year later twenty percent of respondents voted against memorials of any kind even though that was not one of the survey options. It was clear, as Inglis noted, that monumentality was out of fashion, a shift in taste that reflected the broader reality that war memorials for this second cataclysm attracted "far less energy, imagination and money." [19] In any event, the most common commemorative response was to add names to existing war memorials. Where new monuments were constructed, the generic soldier figure was generally avoided, indicating how closely it had become associated with the First World War in the public consciousness. The Korean War, the Malayan Emergency (1948-60) and Confrontation with Indonesia (1963-66) were later additions often pursued in conjunction with attempts to memorialise the Vietnam War. Some memorials, like the one in Hyde Park, Sydney, the AWM, Canberra, and the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne became the site of protests and targets for vandals.

Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall (2015) and the *Australian Peacekeeping Memorial* (2017) are recent additions to the commemorative landscape. As Young observed in connection with Holocaust memorials, war memorials "juxtapose, narrate, and remember events" according to personal tastes, political agendas and the "temper of the time."[20] The temper of the times in 2015 and 2017 were very different than they had been in the immediate post-war years when the first great wave of memorial construction began. Our national mythology is, as Stephens observes, being re-written. Globalisation, multiculturalism, a newly resurgent nationalism, the ongoing debates about national identity, and a population that has, in the main, no first-hand experience of war, have created a fertile environment for a re-imagining of Anzac.[21] Memorials, which no longer need to act as empty tombs, reflect these developments:

> Spurred by the abstract form of the popular Vietnam Memorial in Washington, design direction has been away from classical traditions of design and towards providing an experiential and emotional journey. Rather than reference to a heroic past or to romantic nineteenth century classical symbolism (with its funeral overtones) there has been a tendency for new memorials to drive deeper into the darker and more complex aspects of war experience and to write these into their designs.[22]

This second wave of memorial building that took hold during the 1980s did indeed drive deeper as the focus shifted to "sites which spoke to the contemporary obsession with mass catastrophe, victimhood and trauma."[23] The memorials assessed in this chapter both fit that paradigm although not quite as easily as one might expect, as the following analysis will show.

The Great Silence: *Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall*

The sculpture *Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall* (2015) by Girramay artist Tony Albert is ostensibly an effort to "acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who served in the Nation's military."[24] This deceptively straightforward raison d'être does not in fact identify the primary purpose of the memorial. To do this, the viewer must engage with the memorial in the context of the centenary commemorations of the First World War and the continuing debate over the place of the Frontier Wars in the national story. It is evident the design was clearly more informed by contemporary politics than martial achievement. Interestingly, the first memorial honouring Australian Indigenous servicemen and women titled the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander War Memorial* which was unveiled in Adelaide in 2013 is similarly literal in style though it is infinitely more conventional in its politics. A WW1 soldier and WW2 nurse stand above a coolamon, a traditional Indigenous holding vessel, surrounded by the Rainbow Serpent, a central element of the Indigenous creation story. Nevertheless, there is no hiding the fact that this is not an attempt to disrupt the Anzac narrative. It is a demand for inclusion. In contrast, Albert's design demands an alteration in the understanding of war in the national story.

Though restrictive policies limited the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who served in the First and Second World Wars, 6300 did enlist. They did not form a homogenous group and were instead scattered across units. Statistically they did not constitute a large minority in the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), as did, for example, the 18 000 German Australians. Current estimates by the AWM and in contemporary consultation with service family members and the indigenous community, indicate that by the end of the First

World War 1300 Aboriginal men had enlisted. A third of the indigenous soldiers who served in World War One were killed in action or died of wounds and disease, which is higher than for the AIF as a whole.[25] It is estimated that a further 5000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women served during the Second World War. Accurate numbers are difficult to determine because the official list of enlisted men and women contain only names and religion, not cultural backgrounds. Though many found military service, both then and in later conflicts, an "egalitarian experience,"[26] on their return to Australia "most were denied veterans benefits, continued to live under restrictive protection acts and confronted prejudice."[27] Nevertheless, Indigenous Australians have been involved in virtually every military conflict and peace keeping mission in which Australia has participated since Federation.[28] On their return from the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War they met with very little, if any official recognition. As Terry Garwood, then director of Aboriginal Affairs Victoria wrote in the early 1990s, "Whatever the fate of the ANZAC legend. Aboriginal people were given no place in it. Their contribution to the defence of Australia has been excluded through neglect."[29] This neglect was part of a broader process famously characterised by William Stanner as the "great Australian silence."[30]

The Australian Government has been anything but neglectful of Australia's military history during the centenary commemorations of the First World War; nor could it afford to be given the extent of the war's influence on Australian public and political culture and perceptions about national character and identity.[31] Funding of various initiatives is set to exceed $330 million (AUD), which will exceed the combined total expended by the UK, France, Germany, Canada and New Zealand.[32] The ideology has, however, remained static, with funding guidelines generally favouring traditional forms of commemoration which do "little to unsettle the essentially 'white' narrative of ANZAC."[33] Even the otherwise laudable efforts to make the

mythology more inclusive in recent years have proved problematic, for they have helped generate "a dangerous chauvinism that increasingly equates national history with military history, and national belonging with a willingness to accept the Anzac legend as Australian patriotism's very essence."[34] One seemingly questions the narrative at their personal and professional peril.

The centenary celebrations have seen an official engagement with the granting of recognition to Indigenous service but it has not been unconditional, a reality no more evident than in the response of the AWM. This institution remains one of the single greatest contributors to the shaping of the national discourse about war and its place in the national narrative. Over the course of the centenary, it has been involved in a number of Indigenous projects, ranging from displays in the redeveloped galleries to the production of a list of Indigenous personnel who served during the First World War. In addition to its own initiatives it also provided input into a variety of other projects, one of which was the Eora Journey History project in Sydney.[35] Delivered under the auspices of The City of Sydney, the local government authority, the project's overarching goal was to address "the need for better recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage."[36] In particular, the ownership of the land by the Gadigal people and the present Indigenous community was regularly emphasised. This "Recognition in the Public Domain", one of the four key components of the Eora Journey,[37] was framed around seven major public art projects. Each was to be created by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artist and would help "reactivate the knowledge of specific places and events in Aboriginal history at key sites within the city."[38] One of these artworks was the sculpture *Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall*.

Though the AWM is committed to the commemoration of the war service of Indigenous Australians, this does not extend to a recognition within its own walls of the Frontier Wars waged between Indigenous Australians and white settlers. The absence of a declaration of war and the insistence that the AWM's task is to tell the story of Australian forces deployed overseas sees this responsibility passed to the National Museum of Australia. The more conservative estimates place the death toll of this undeclared war between 1788 and 1928 at 22 000, 20 000 of them Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders killed either in official or non-official actions.[39] The balance was comprised of non-Indigenous people who were either actively engaged in hostilities when they were killed or who lost their lives in the course of a depressing cycle of reprisal and counter reprisal. Historians Raymond Evans and Robert Ørsted-Jensen have challenged these figures, and instead estimate that the deaths of Indigenous Australians totalled in excess of 65 000 in Queensland alone,[40] a figure that is both appalling and symbolically significant given that it exceeds the number of deaths incurred by Australia during the First World War. Though beyond the scope of this chapter, the characterization of this conflict as somehow 'not a war' is not one that survives close scrutiny. As Henry Reynolds observed, this conflict was "clearly one of the few significant wars in Australian history and arguably the single most important one. For Indigenous Australia, it was their Great War."[41]

Given the "relentless militarisation of Australian history"[42] and the central role played by the AWM in the dissemination of its version of that history, the exclusion of the full Indigenous experience of conflict is no ordinary slight. In 2016 alone, it attracted 1.14 million visitors, who in the opinion of the director, Dr Brendan Nelson left "with a deeper understanding of Australia as a nation."[43] While at times the AWM's exhibits do indeed "constitute a poignant illustration of the unnecessary tragedy of war" there are some fears that other exhibits point to the

"contribution Australians made to victory in the defence of core values, telling us that war is worthwhile, necessary and even glorious."[44] On the issue of the Frontier Wars, the AWM is silent, a policy that Alan Stephens sees as "historically dishonest" and an "impediment to reconciliation." He is well aware of the symbolic significance of relegating the task of explaining the Frontier Wars to other institutions and commemorative sites such as the National Museum:

> In other words, pre-Federation white volunteers who chose to fight overseas for the British crown and its commercial and colonial interests have been legally defined as 'Australians', while pre-Federation Indigenous warriors who fought invaders for their homeland, their families, and their way of life, have been officially defined out of our war commemoration history.[45]

At least for the time being, therefore, the link between Indigenous service in the Australian military and the Frontier Wars must be made elsewhere. To show the importance of location and good timing, despite its overt contribution to an attempted disruption of the Anzac mythology and its engagement with the issues of Aboriginal recognition and the Frontier Wars, *Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall* has managed to sidestep controversy almost in spite of itself. The sculpture was a response to a request from the Redfern Babana Aboriginal Men's Group, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Veterans and Services Association, and the Coloured Digger Committee who as Suzanne Lacy observed in a different context, wished to enter themselves into "the stream of history."[46] These groups organise the annual Coloured Digger ANZAC March in Redfern, Sydney, which is itself a place replete with connections to the modern Indigenous struggle.[47]

As with many memorials, this one also started with the work of a committee. Fourteen Indigenous artists submitted proposals for the site in Hyde Park in Sydney, four of whom were subsequently invited to submit a stage two proposal, with Albert ultimately being awarded the final tender. The sculpture commission evaluation committee was made up of representatives from the City of Sydney Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Design Advisory panels, the Eora Journey Public Art Working Group, the Art Gallery of NSW and the AWM. Though it makes a political statement, as all memorials do, it has avoided the usual controversies. Perhaps the sheer magnitude of funding for commemorative activities rendered the price tag of $500 000 a non-issue when viewed in the context of a plethora of other initiatives. Its placement in a significant though uncontroversial setting in the middle of one of the most multi-cultural urban settings in the country and its rather conventional, literal style may also have contributed to its ready acceptance. Yet the rhetoric around it has been anything but traditional, while the memorial's literal form is incongruous with the recent aesthetics of war commemoration.

Albert's use of oversized .303 bullets, a central motif that appears unashamedly phallic, ties the sculpture in a literal sense to the broader story of Australia's wartime experience. This is, however, a secondary, perhaps even peripheral concern. The sculpture, and the rhetoric used by both artist and commentators, places its conception, siting and construction firmly in the context of trauma:

> What has been forgotten – subjugated knowledges – like the memories of past struggles, returns to haunt the structures of power that instigated the violence in the first place. Trauma is that which refuses to take its place in history as done and finished with. It demands an acknowledgement of a different temporality, where the past is produced by – or even takes place in – the present.[48]

Figure 30.1: Tony Albert's sculptural artwork *Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall*
By Silverfig - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=43822844

Yet the attempt to communicate Indigenous trauma and disrupt power within the parameters of Australian military history is problematic. The national community is, as Benedict Anderson argued, an imagined one that is "inherently limited and sovereign."[49] It enfranchises some but inevitably it also divides along racial lines. Albert's memorial simultaneously attempts to disrupt a national community that owes much of its imagining to military victories but does so as part of a nationwide commemoration of the conflict that reinforces the hegemony of white Australia. To celebrate the Aboriginal contribution to, for example, the First World War one must confront the fact that they fought as members of the Australian Imperial Force in defence of an Empire that had dispossessed them of their land and in the service of a nation that did not recognise them as citizens. Though understandable, any attempt to link the Indigenous struggle

against European settlement and military service after 1901 is, in Padraic Gibson view, "fundamentally mistaken. There is a real danger of the proud tradition of Aboriginal resistance to British invasion being used to bolster the militaristic, nationalist ideology being carefully cultivated through the ANZAC centenary."[50]

Albert avoids this paradox by confronting enemies that are domestic rather than foreign, for it was a war fought on Australian soil which from the outset appears to have been the central concern of the artist and the funding bodies. Julie Cracknel, the company director of Cracknell and Lonergan, the architectural firm which help design the memorial, saw its value inextricably tied to domestic considerations quite divorced from Australia's wartime history: "It's part of the reconciliation process and is a powerful reminder of the undying connection between the first people and this land which we now share."[51] It is evident from this statement that a traditional Anzac connection is not proffered; instead there is an overt recognition of the sculpture's primary ideological purpose which is the exploration of Aboriginal trauma. Though the bullet is a "universal signifier of conflict" for Albert the metaphor is more about the target than the projectile: "All Aboriginal people wear the target. I challenge you to find an Aboriginal man who hasn't been subjected to racism or police brutality – it is a systemic issue both here in Australia and overseas for all people of colour."[52]

Even when broader military history is explored it is done so with an eye on the mistreatment of Indigenous servicemen *after* their wartime service. As internationally recognised Australian Indigenous curator Hetti Perkins wrote, "as the title [of the sculpture] suggests, Albert comments on the shameful treatment by the armed forces of Indigenous people, who fought as equals yet continued to be treated inequitably upon their return home."[53] As an Indigenous Australian and the grandson of a Second World War veteran, Albert did make some

attempt to place his design within the context of other war commemoration in his initial submission to the City of Sydney: "I envisage this memorial to be a special and powerful place for contemplation and remembrance. I have selected a site of close proximity with the existing War Memorial that also lends itself to a meeting ground as I hope this place will become an important site for indigenous service men and women and their families to congregate."[54] This is particularly suggestive of the "fundamentally interactive, dialogical quality of every memorial space,"[55] one which ensures that meaning making is inevitably a shared activity:

> For public memory and its meanings depend not just on the forms and figures in the monument itself, but on the viewer's response to the monument, how it is used politically and religiously in the community, who sees it under what circumstances, how its figures enter other media and are recast in new surroundings … memorials by themselves remain inert and amnesiac, dependent on visitors for whatever memory they finally produce.[56]

In that sense, the memorial's prominent siting in visible proximity to the Sydney ANZAC Memorial signifies a solid physical, but belated acknowledgment of the service and suffering endured by Indigenous personnel in the defence of Australia.[57] Yet the Hyde Park site was also selected because of its historical standing among Australia's Indigenous people "as a ritual contest ground, a cross roads for traditional walking trails and as an important site for ceremony."[58] This consideration was also explored by Thea Perkins in the Cracknell and Lonegran commemorative publication: the site was "a ceremonial and combat ground that formed a central gathering place for Aboriginal groups travelling from vast distances." [59] This is consistent with Arthur Danto's characterisation of a memorial as "a special precinct, extruded from life, a segregated enclave where we honour the dead."[60] This is evidence also of the

spatiality of public monuments, a characteristic that sees them become more than just a "material backdrop from which a story is told, but the spaces themselves constitute the meaning by becoming both a physical location and a sight-line of interpretation."[61]

This memorial, like all others, possesses both physical and metaphysical qualities, a tactile and temporal dimension that Young describes as the "texture of memory."[62] Yet its metaphysical qualities are stronger than the physical, for in purely aesthetic terms it lacks a sense of gravitas in and of itself. It relies almost entirely on the modern political context for its resonance. It is almost as though the broader failure to include the Indigenous story in the Anzac mythology left even those committed to righting that situation bereft of symbols, thereby condemning them to operate in a no-man's-land between purely Aboriginal motifs and recognizable military iconography. That said, the memorial is proof again that public memories are not absolute, but are in fact "contingent on the agency of those who express them, and are inherently fluid."[63] Its value is perhaps better measured in the extent to which it symbolises a capacity for disenfranchised groups to gain access to commemorative platforms and thereby make a contribution to the formation of public memories.

A kinder, gentler Anzac: The Australian Peacekeeping Memorial

The emergence of the construct of a 'kinder, gentler Anzac' in the late 1960s and 1970s, a process championed by Bill Gammage in *The Broken Years*, transformed the Anzac mythology from one "grounded in beliefs about racial identity and martial capacity to a legend that speaks in the modern idiom of trauma, suffering and empathy."[64] At least in a literary sense "the emphasis shifted to exposing war in its guise of the antithesis of civilisation. War became no longer

foundational but contradictory to civilisation, war being the ruination of society."[65] In *The Anzac Book* (1916), his war correspondence, the official history and the creation of the AWM, Charles Bean presented the story of the AIF as an epic. For Gammage it was a tragedy.[66] Yet this shift in focus did not mean that the service of Australians in United Nations' peacekeeping operations would find a ready place in the Anzac mythology. The trauma of Australian servicemen and women did indeed dominate this changing perception. Yet the civilian victims of foreign wars and the trauma they endure is not an easy fit for a mythology that is essentially a military one.

By the time the peacekeeping memorial was unveiled in September 2017, it had been seventy years since Australia's involvement in the first United Nations chartered peacekeeping mission. Four Australian peacekeepers served as the first UN military observers as referendum monitors in 1947 in the then Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) as part of the United Nations Good Office Commission (UNGOC). This first Australian mission eventually grew to a contingent of 45 personnel over four years and included Army, Navy and Airforce personnel deployed as military observers. Ultimately the information sourced from the United Nations military observers assisted the Indonesian republican movement in winning independence from Dutch colonial rule. As was the case with the 1947 deployment, in the early years Australian peacekeepers were generally deployed as unarmed observers to ensure that neither side in a warring conflict violated a United Nations ceasefire agreement. From the outset, however, it was a complex process:

> Peace keeping or containment operations involve the imposition of a neutral military force to contain the outbreak, spread, continuation or escalation of a dispute. The aim is to physically separate protagonists and simultaneously bring them together to

resolve differences by non-military means, such as elections, referenda or a redrawing of territorial boundaries.[67]

Peace-keeping can involve a range of interventions that include the deployment of political and civilian advisers, unarmed military observers and armed contingents, humanitarian and monitoring forces, specialist training teams and advisors for police, medical support and logistics. It is often a hybrid multidimensional operation that includes the provision of basic necessities such as water, food and electricity, and the creation or reconstruction of infrastructure such as hospitals and schools. For example, Australia is widely recognised for its contribution to the Cambodian Peace Settlement. In Somalia, a battalion size contingent contributed to the delivery of humanitarian aid during that country's civil war and famine. In the Pacific region, Australian peacekeepers performed significant roles in the Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste (formerly East Timor) and Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. The largest peacekeeping commitment by Australia was to Timor Leste where approximately 6000 Australian military and police personnel were deployed. In 2017 Australia was the 11th largest financial contributor to the United Nations peacekeeping budget. There have been approximately 80 000 Australian military, police and civilians deployed in peacekeeping roles on 62 operations. There are risks. To date sixteen Australian Defence Force and police personal have died while deployed on peacekeeping operations out of a total of over 3000 from 120 countries.

In November 2007, the Canberra National Memorials Committee approved the allocation of a site on ANZAC Parade, a major road running from the front of the AWM toward Lake Burley Griffin, named in honour of the American architect who designed the city. The decision by the Menzies government in 1965 to plan for the placement of ten memorials along the road

was inspired by the commemorative actions of two democracies, one ancient and one modern. It was to be the Australian equivalent of the sacred way that had joined Athens to Eleusis, which was flanked by sculptures that commemorated heroes, gods, and civic events, and the Mall in Washington D.C.[68] Like the memorials that would begin to appear along the Avenue in Canberra, the commemorative structures on or near the Mall, such as the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial, seek to "instruct posterity about the past and, in so doing, necessarily reaches a decision about what is worth recovering."[69] The memorials that have been built along Anzac Parade reflect the diversity of views regarding what is worth recovering and how that should be communicated in stone: the "niches were up for bids, and by 1990 eight of the ten were filled by a miscellany of sculptures, each the result of lobbying from a particular group which convinced the federal government, advised by planners, that they had a right to be represented along the sacred way."[70]

First to be erected was a memorial to the Desert Mounted Corps (1968) the Royal Australian Airforce (1973, an early journey into abstraction), the Rats of Tobruk (1983), and the more conventional memorials to the Navy (1986) and Army (1989). There were other choices that were more eclectic, notably the Ataturk Memorial Garden (1985) and the Australian Hellenic Memorial (1988), which reflected ethnic identity as much as the nation's military past.[71] In 1992 they were joined by the most impressive of them all, the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial, which despite the best intentions of planners better expressed "continuities with Anzac than at signalling [domestic] conflict."[72] The Australian Service Nurses National Memorial (1999), the Korean War Memorial (2000), the Australian-New Zealand Memorial (2001) and the Boer War Memorial (May 2017) followed. Then, finally, in September 2017, it was the Peacekeepers' turn.

The Australian Peacekeeping Memorial had its genesis in 2004 with a group of Australian peacekeeping veterans and related organisations who formed the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Project Committee (APMP). The committee was established under the stewardship of Major General (retired) Tim Ford, who himself wore the blue beret as a peacekeeper in the Middle East in the late 1990s. In 2007 the APMP Committee conducted a national two stage design competition with the winning concept by Bennett and Trimble Architects announced at Parliament House in December 2008. The memorial was funded by donations from a number of Australian companies, strong support and assistance of peacekeeping and veteran organisations, major grants from the federal government, and individual donations. The steps leading up to the memorial have ‘Past’, ‘Present’ and ‘Future’ engraved on them. The memorial itself is comprised of two equally weighted monoliths set slightly off the ground in a stone court. They are separated by a glowing passage of light that reminds the viewer of the sacrifice made by the peacekeepers as they keep warring groups apart. To the rear of the memorial is a gathering space where the individual peace keeping campaigns are listed on a commemorative beam. The names of the missions are generally not well known, and for all the undoubted dedication and professionalism of the peacekeepers, the Western Sahara, Somalia and Cambodia have no resonance in the collective memory anywhere near approaching a Gallipoli, Pozières, Kokoda or Long Tan.

Figure 30.2: The Australian Peacekeeping Memorial
By Nick-D - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=63002388

In step with the pre-eminence given to trauma in the Anzac mythology, the peacekeeping memorial is characterised as a site for reflective grief, remembrance and loss for all Australian peacekeepers, their families and loved ones to gather, reminisce and mourn. As Australian Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove remarked at the Peace Keeping Memorial unveiling: "In their blue berets, peacekeepers are a symbol of hope. They save lives and change lives, they restore order and bring security and stability."[73] Three months before this speech, Cosgrove also spoke at the unveiling of the Boer War Memorial. Though a commemoration of an imperial conflict of little significance to Australia even when it was occurring, a viewer is not vexed by these broader considerations. The life-size bronze figures of four mounted horsemen seemingly about to gallop onto Anzac Avenue is as visually striking as any other memorial on the parade. Its iconography, however, is decidedly anachronistic and draws on tropes more closely

associated in Australian minds with another war entirely. For though in his speech Cosgrove referred to the Australians who fought in South Africa as the "fathers of the Anzacs",[74] in its iconography it draws so heavily on the image of the Light Horsemen from the First World War that he might metaphorically have made a case for them being the sons of Anzac.

Conclusion

The recent construction of *Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall* (2015) and the *Australian Peacekeeping Memorial* (2017) reflects the importance of war memorials in the Australian commemorative landscape. They are not, however, entirely typical. In the case of the former, though its designer and his supporters might in some respects be characterised as participants in a century long process of nation building, they are in fact attempting to re-imagine the nation. Indeed, as Benedict Anderson observed, the nation has always been an imagined community[75] and the desire to include the Indigenous story is in reality an attempt to challenge the parameters of that community. The memorial to the peacekeepers, less literal and more abstract in its iconography, seeks inclusion in the dominant imagining rather than a disruption of it. Both, however, are challenged by the pervasiveness of the Anzac mythology, for indeed, it has cast a giant shadow over any discussion of Australian history.

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[5] Alan Borg, *War Memorials from Antiquity to the Present* (London, Leo Cooper, 1991) xii.

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[10] Michael Scheib, "A history of Australia's official war art scheme of the First World War," (PhD thesis, The University of Sydney, 2015).

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[20] Young, *The Texture of Memory*, viii.

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[22] Stephens, "Recent Directions", 151.

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[47] In December 1992, Keating launched Australia's program for the International Year of the World's Indigenous People with a speech to a largely indigenous crowd at Redfern Park in Sydney. He was the first Prime Minister to acknowledge the impact of European settlement on Indigenous Australians in a move that signified an alteration in the official interpretation of Australian history.

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[52] "Tony Albert in Conversation," 2017.

[53] Hettie Perkins, *Civic Actions Artists' Practices Beyond the Museum*, Museum of Contemporary Art (2017): 59.

[54] Tony Albert, *Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall*, commemorative book produced by Cracknell and Lonergan Architects, 2015.

[55] Young, *The Texture of Memory*, xii.

[56] Young, *The Texture of Memory*, xii-xiii.

[57] The landmark electoral referendum of 1967 was a vote on the amending the Federal Government constitution to recognise the indigenous people of Australia. The amendment was overwhelmingly endorsed, winning 90% of votes cast across the six states. For the first time Indigenous Australian were recognised as having the same civil rights as the predominantly white population. The Hyde Park ANZAC Memorial, completed in 1934, is the main commemorative military monument in Sydney.

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[59] Thea Perkins, *Yininmadyemi Thou didst let fall*, commemorative book produced by Cracknell and Lonergan Architects, 2016, p. 21.

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[70] Inglis, *Sacred Places*, 382.

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[73] See Adrienne Francis, "National peacekeeping memorial, 12 years in the making, opens on Anzac Parade," ABC News, accessed 29 September, 2017. http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-09-14/peacekeeping-memorial-opens-on-anzac-parade-in-canberra/8945020

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